LISTING OF CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Original) A distributor device comprising:

an input device for the input of a product stream;

a preliminary distributor for distributing, measuring out and loosening the product stream;

a store for receiving the product stream;

an accumulating shaft;

a sifter for separating fractions of the product stream;

a conveying element for transporting the product stream from said store to said accumulating shaft;

at least one external delivery device for delivery of at least one additional component, wherein said at least one external delivery device is arranged between said store and said sifter relative to a transport direction of the product stream.

2. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said distributor device is structured and arranged for loading a continuous cigarette-making machine.

3. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said accumulating shaft is arranged in front of said sifter relative to said transport direction.

4. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said accumulating shaft is arranged behind said sifter relative to said transport direction.

5. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said sifter is structured and arranged to separate fractions of the product stream that are to be processed and that are not to be processed

6. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said external delivery device delivers the at least one additional component to said product stream into said distributor device.

7. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said external delivery device delivers the at least one additional component into the product stream.

8. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 1, further comprising at least one additional store for receiving the at least one additional component.

9. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 8, further comprising at least one additional conveying element associated with said at least one additional store.

10. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 9, wherein said store and said at least one additional store are each associated with separate conveying elements.

11. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 9, wherein said store and said at least one additional store are arranged in front of said sifter relative to said transport direction of the product stream.

12. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said sifter comprises a common approach from said delivery device.

13. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 8, wherein said sifter comprises a common approach from said store and from said at least one additional store.

14. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 1, wherein said sifter comprises at least two approaches.

15. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 14, wherein said approaches are arranged one behind or above the other in the transport direction of the product stream, wherein said approaches comprise an approach for at least one additional store located above an approach for said store.

16. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 15, wherein a cross-section d_1 of said sifter in a region of the upper approach is smaller than a cross-section d_2 of said sifter in a region of the lower approach.

17. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 1, further comprising at least one further external delivery device positioned behind said sifter relative to said transport direction of the product stream.

18. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 17, wherein said at least one further external delivery device is structured and arranged to deliver at least one further additive.

19. (Original) The distributor device in accordance with claim 18, wherein said at least one further additive is delivered into the product stream.

20. (Original) A method for loading a continuous cigarette-making machine, comprising:

introducing a product stream into a distributor device through an input device;

distributing, measuring out and loosening of the product stream via a preliminary distributor;

storing the product stream in a store;

transporting the product stream via a conveying element from the store to one of an accumulating shaft and a sifter;

sifting the product stream in the sifter; and

mixing the product stream with at least one further component within the distributor device after the store relative to a transport direction of the product stream.

21. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 20, wherein the product stream is sifted before being fed into the accumulating shaft.

22. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 20, wherein the product stream is sifted after being fed into the accumulating shaft.

23. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 20, wherein the product stream is mixed with the at least one further component immediately before sifting.

24. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 23, wherein the at least one further component is stored within the distributor device.

25. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 20, wherein the product stream is mixed with at least one further component during sifting.

26. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 25, wherein the at least one further component is stored within the distributor device.

27. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 20, further comprising delivering the product stream and the at least one further component to the sifter via separate approaches.

28. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 27, wherein each further component is conducted into the sifter behind the product stream relative to the transport direction.

29. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 20, further comprising mixing each further component with the product stream in a region at which the product stream exits the sifter.

30. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 20, wherein an air stream flows within the sifter, and the speed of the air stream within the sifter is higher in the region at which the product stream exits the sifter than in a remainder of the sifter.

31. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 27, further comprising adjusting a degree of sifting by altering positions of the approaches into the sifter.

32. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 20, wherein the product stream is mixed with the at least one further component, which is delivered to the sifter via a common approach.

33. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 20, wherein the product stream and the at least one further component are taken from different stores within the distributor device.

34. (Original) The method in accordance with claim 20, wherein, after sifting, the process further comprises delivering at least one further additive to the mixture of the product stream and the at least one further component.

35. The method in accordance with claim 20, wherein the at least one further component and the product stream are delivered to an accumulating shaft via separate approaches, and the product stream and the at least one further component are mixed in the accumulating shaft.